



The BRICS and Africa: Political - Economic Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract: The BRICS is newly emerged post-Cold War bloc (an acronym for Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) constituting heterogeneous countries of diverse political, economic, social structure and organization with different geo-spatial features, being the reason for raising the new scholarly polarizing “discourse on their geopolitical and geo-economics significance [since] 2009”. The BRICS represent “over 40% of the global population with the combined economic weight in 2015 equaled almost a third of the global GDP in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) terms (roughly equal with the G-7 countries), [and they] are the newly emerging center of gravity in the global economic system”. The major objective of the study is exploring, explaining and analyzing the political-economic opportunities emerged and challenges posed on Africa’s overall development by examining the BRICS-Africa relation and its subsequent political and economic contribution on challenging and breaking the political and economic barriers of the Western dominated African economic system in the global economics where direct investment, market, aid, loans and funds are attached with strictly imposed Western political conditionality and their financial and monetary institutions which are the masters of the global economic management since the end of World War II. Methodologically, qualitative research approach was employed by collecting both qualitative and quantitative data in “exploring a problem and developing a detailed understanding of a central Phenomenon” generating “results either in non-quantitative form or in the form which are not subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis”, being exploratory, explanatory and analytical. The BRICS contributed political and economic opportunities, posing parallel challenges on Africa’s overall development, generating renewed interest from its traditional western trading partners out of fear of losing their long-held strategic and economic interests in Africa to the new rising Southern powers.

Keywords: BRICS: Africa: Political: Economic Opportunities: Challenges:

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1.0 Introduction of the Study

The newly emerged bloc in the post-Cold War era, the BRICS is an acronym for (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) constituting the group of heterogeneous countries having diverse political, economic, social structure and organization with different geo-spatial features and the establishment of the bloc is the reason for raising the new scholarly polarizing “discourse on their geopolitical and geo economics significance in 2009” (Mathur, 2015). The BRICS are currently playing an increasingly outstanding “role in world trade, investment, finance and governance” (ECA 2014), contributing on the demise of the unipolar world order since the 1990s in the global politics and international relations in which the scholars who are proponents of the bloc have “treated the emergence of the BRICS forum as a reflection of a new, multi-polar world order; a result of the shift in economic and political power from the ‘global north’ to the ‘global south’” (Mathur, 2015). Statistically speaking, the BRICS represent over 40% of the global population and their combined economic weight in 2015 equalled almost a third of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) terms (or roughly the same as the G-7 countries), and they are emerging as a new center of gravity in the international economic system” (BRICS 2017). The BRICS is a bloc and co-operative group, plus their individual emergence on the international stage is different because it is the non-Western global initiative of the post-Cold War period with the potential institutional framework and influential global actors in the international political-economic order which are being able to shift the power dynamics of the international world order dominated by the capitalist West for long (Jash, 2017). Since the research topic is “The BRICS & Africa: Political-Economic Opportunities and Challenges”, it would be very vital to explain the major political and economic facts about Africa, which according Dawit (2015) is the world’s second largest and populous continent covering an area about 30,244,049 square km, and having about 1.1 billion people, and as of 2012, there are 54 independent countries on the mainland Africa and surrounding islands which are mainly divided in to two world geographical regions: North Africa and the Sub-

Saharan Africa. Currently, the African economy is the fastest growing in the world where “seven of the ten countries with the highest projected annual growth rate between 2013 and 2015 are in Africa” (ECA 2014), therefore, on ensuring the continuity of Africa’s economic development, the continent’s political and economic engagement with BRICS is very essential having profound implications for Africa’s development in multiple aspects, and it is based on this premise that, the study attempted to explore, explain and analyze the political-economic opportunities and challenges of the BRICS on Africa’s overall development that immediately after independence has fallen victim of the Western imperial influence and domination. Therefore, on attaining the major objective of this study, an attempt had been made to answer the following research questions: -

- What are the major political-economic opportunities and challenges of the BRICS on Africa’s development? And
- What are the critical political-economic policy recommendations African governments must adopt both on nurturing the opportunities and mitigating the challenges which emerge in their overall interaction with the BRICS?

2.0 Background of the Study

2.1 The Origin, Emergence and Development of the BRICS

The end of Cold War ensured the demise of Communism and the emergence of the New World Order which is described by Mesfin (1999) as, “the supremacy of the US with Western Europe under the wings of the eagle.” It was during this Unipolar international political order that China and India rose as powerful economic powers globally, rapidly transforming “international relations in a significant way, resulting in a dramatic shift in the balance of power from the West to the East” (Arkhangelskaya, 2015).

This paved the way for the emergence of the BRIC where the term is coined for the first time in 2001 “by Goldman Sachs” chief economist, Jim O’Neil made a composition of the emerging economies and political powers at the regional and international level” (Jash, 2017) including only Brazil, Russia, India and China which are having the following three distinct attributes: -

- (1) *The outstanding size of their economies,*
- (2) *Strong growth rates, leading to increasing significance in world economy, and*
- (3) *The demand for a stronger political voice in international governance structures, which corresponds to their economic status” (EU 2012).*

Initially, when the bloc was formed South Africa was not the member of the group and it joined the group in 2011 in which “South Africa being the only African member of the G20, its inclusion into the BRIC group provides it with a more representative structure and further emphasizes the BRIC countries commitment to strengthening their presence and engagement in Africa” (Mminele, 2016), and with this reality “the transformation of the BRIC acronym from an investment term into a household name of international politics and into a semi-institutionalized political outfit (called BRICS, with a capital ‘S’), is one of the defining developments in international politics in the past decades” (Stuenkel, 2020). The BRICS are striving for the establishment and realization of “fairer international governance” in a multilateral system which they perceive as dominated by the Euro-American West, and this is clearly described as “since the beginning of their dialogue, in 2006, these countries have sought to establish fairer international governance, one that would be more suitable to their national interests,” (Amiel, 2019), at the same time opening genuine, real political and economic opportunities for Africa that has been exploited, dominated and marginalized by the exclusive Western development strategies and policies in the global political-economic system since its independence period.

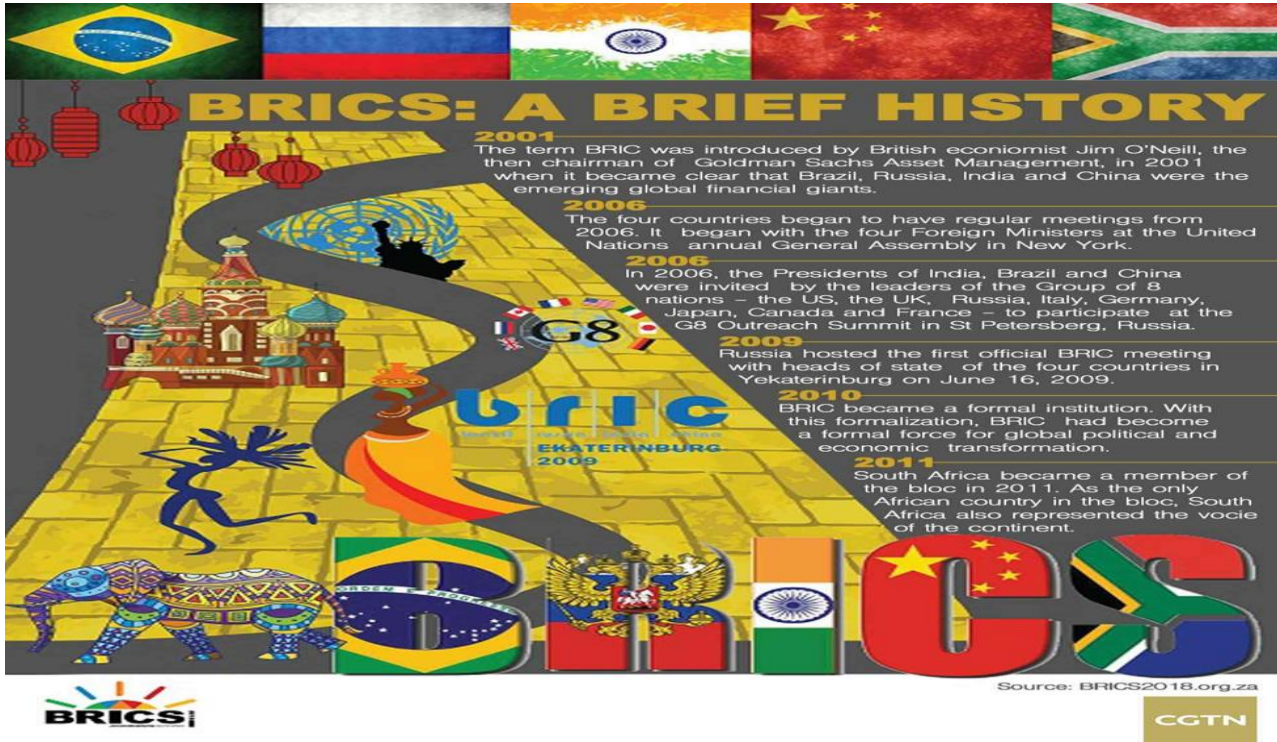


Figure 1: The colourful presentation of BRICS’ brief history from 2001-2011
Source: BRICS2018.org.za (CGTN).

Historically, the evolutionary origin and emergence of the BRICS that diagrammatically displayed in the preceding page is briefly summarized as follows: -

Having emerged strongly from the 2008-2009 financial crises and projecting a viable model of growth, the member states formalized BRIC as an institutional body with the first summit of the BRIC leaders held on 16 June 2009 in Yekaterinburg, Russia. This summit concretized the acronym “BRIC” into a reality by laying the broad objective of building a “more democratic and multipolar world based on the rule of law, equality, mutual respect, cooperation, coordinated action, and collective decision making of all states”. While in 2010, with the inclusion of South Africa into the gamut, the acronym expanded to “BRICS”- symbolizing the collective economic clout of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (Jash, 2017).

According (Arkhangelskaya, 2015), the emergence of these new ‘Southern powers’ in the global political-economy that was dominated by the West for long and their increasing engagement with the African continent is a clear indication of Africa’s importance, position and its huge role in the global economy and international politics.

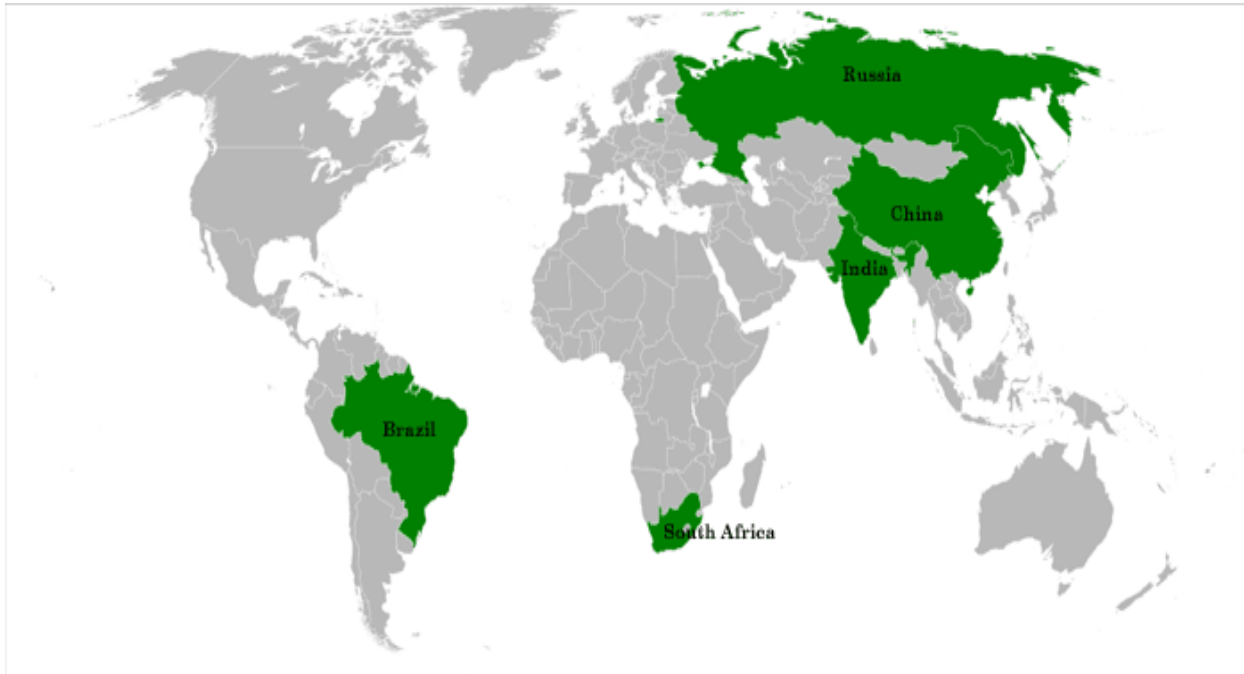
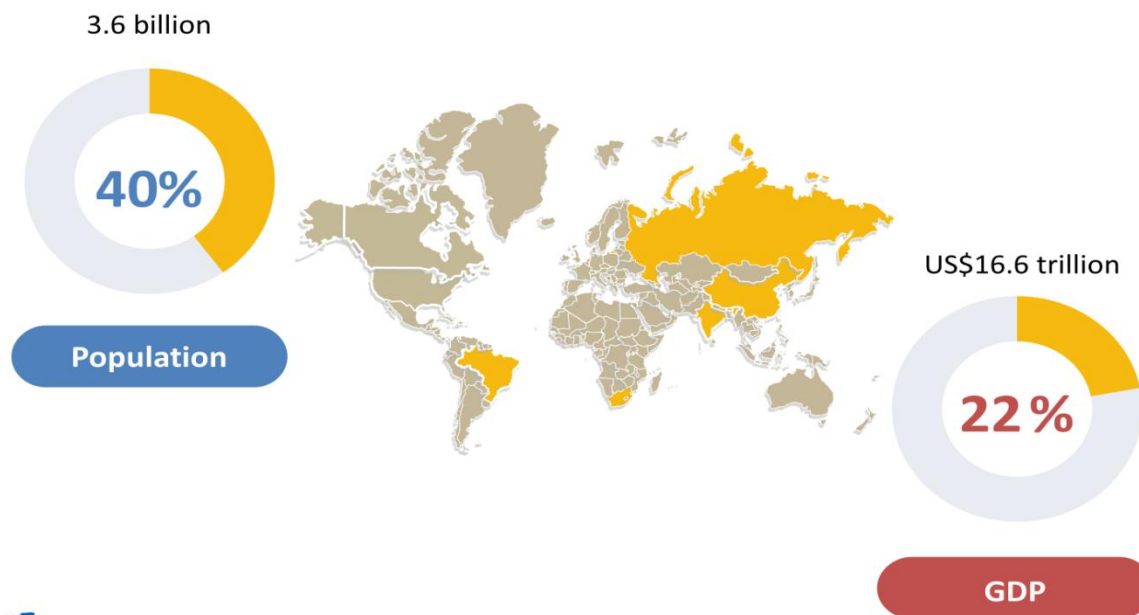


Fig.2: Map showing location of BRICS countries
Source: Map: Cflm001, Mediaiwiki, public domain

This has also practically implied that North-South relations are being superseded by South-East and even Africa-South East relations, with profound implication for Africa's newly emerged opportunity in achieving the desired political and economic development in which "the BRICS countries seek to establish a parallel system with its own distinctive set of rules, institutions, and currencies of power, rejecting key tenets of liberal internationalism" (Stuenkel, 2020). The revolutionary approach of the BRICS bloc has placed special focus on creating the vital political-economic opportunities for Africa's development having greater significance and impact on Africa, and these issues can be seen as important terrain for the practical implementation of BRICS cooperation in these two spheres. Since the topic of the paper is "The BRICS & Africa: Political-Economic Opportunities and Challenges", it is very important to explore, explain and describe the brief overview of the post-independence African political-economy with in the global political-economic perspective that was dominated by the West and its cronies which exacerbated the African economic decline with the adverse impacts on the failure of the African politics since the 1980s.

BRICS % of the total World



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Templates

<http://yourfreetemplates.com>

Fig.3 BRICS statistical computation on the % of the total World population and GDP

Source: <https://yourfreetemplates.com/wpcontent/uploads/2017/09/>

2.2 Overview of the Post-Independence African Political Economy

Africa is a Pandora's box of paradox because it is very rich in natural resources where it "has a treasure chest of raw materials, which will give it a large share of a global commodity production far in the future" (Dawit, 2015). However, the continent is still plagued by severe poverty (ECA 2014) that is complicating its journey towards what the West calls sustainable development that was earlier designated to be the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). According to Owusu (2003), Africa's economic development from independence to the early 1970s was relatively positive, but its downward spiral began since 1973 with ever-increasing negative annual growth rates in per capita food production leading to massive food imports, negatively affecting GDP growth where the public sector was underperforming, and the stagnation of manufacturing increased urban unemployment and rural underemployment with the skyrocketing of the continent's foreign debt. These continental economic catastrophes having their roots deeply entrenched in the continent's colonial legacy, coupled with the 1970s Oil Crisis and global economic slump, negatively amplified in the domestic politics of African states where there was widespread administrative corruption, inefficiency, and institutional breakdown contributing to recurrent coups, war, civil strife, ethnic conflict, and violence, creating political instability eroding Africans' trust in the existing African governments and their administrative capability. The cumulative impact plunged Africa in the early 1980s into a deep economic crisis with the resultant political turmoil in which since the 1990s the African state had become the most demonized social entity that is vilified for its weakness and overextension (Mkandawire, 2001).

Currently, Africa remains the least developed continent in the world because of several indigenous and exogenous factors and actors which include: - the direct and indirect colonial exploitation which have been carried out through neo-colonialist external actors of Western financial institutions with their flawed neo-liberal economic prescriptions being implemented by influencing African states (with the direct and indirect intervention) in their internal affairs through unverified economic policies, strategies, and political directions which were implemented by the comprador, strategically destitute African ruling elites who were well-known in their opulent and vulgar consumerist life-styles, at the same time they recklessly established bloated governments and state apparatus which are marked by patron-client, nepotistic, corrupt, dictatorial, and undemocratic practices. These have contributed to the overdependence of the African economy on the export of basic raw materials and minerals, making it highly susceptible to external developments, aid with disadvantageous effects on the interests of the continent's people, inviting the imposition of exogenous policy

prescriptions on the My-Way or the Highway” principle of the Western donors and the Bretton Woods financial institutions without any alternative. This trend continued not only in Africa but also across the developing world until the emergence of the BRICS with the formal institutional framework beginning 2009. Since the topic of the paper is “The BRICS & Africa: Political-Economic Opportunities and Challenges”, then the following section is devoted on examining and analyzing the BRICS-Africa relation and the political opportunities it created and the challenges it posed on Africa’s economic development.

2.3 Political Opportunities and Challenges of BRICS-Africa Relation on Africa’s Economic Development

The African journey towards the political-economic structural transformation and development has been accompanied by a number of exogenous political, economic and social challenges mainly originating from the West. Contemporarily, these challenges are characterized by the continued imposition of the unorthodox Western political and economic vision and strategy of development where the collapse of Soviet Union with the end of the Cold War left Africa without any alternative global power bloc to turn around where the US emerged to be the single hegemonic power dictating the rest of the world to follow its own liberal political ideology and free market economic policies (Arkhangelskaya, 2015). The most prominent and well known Western imposed political and economic strategy of development is “the Washington Consensus or the Structural Adjustment Program (SAP) identified by its objectives and goal of attaining “structural adjustment of minimizing African states political and economic decision-making power”, forcing them to adopt the policy of “economic deregulation (removing government subsidies, restrictions and floating of their currency exchange rates)”, “privatization of Land and other important modes and means of production in the economy”, and more recently politically “good governance was also added as a new recipe in the African public administration and politics where the concept “good” was not clearly defined in whose interest it was supposed to be good”, obliging Africa’s endorsement of neoliberal political ideology by leaving behind the dependency (endogenous) approach without an alternative for the last two decades beginning since the 1990s. Therefore, the emergence of the BRICS is the blessing-in-disguise for Africa after the financial crisis of 2007-2008, because it “has changed the structural dynamics of the West-dominated financial system by providing an alternative bypassing the normative structure” (Jash, 2017; Arkhangelskaya, 2015). With this, BRICS has come with the political and economic alternatives, choices and opportunities for Africa in counterbalancing US (and the Western) hegemony by calling “for a more democratic and multi-polar world order based on cooperation, coordinated action and collective decision-making of all states” (European Union, 2012:8). Based on this, the major political opportunities BRICS contributed on the survival and continuity of Africa’s economic development include the following: - BRICS have countered Western influence in international institutions such as the UN, the World Bank, and IMF (Stuenkel, 2020) that is the best political opportunity for Africa in forming political alliance at the global politics where it was excluded since its independence. Increased globalization has meant that BRICS has become an important source of global growth and political influence (Mminele, 2016) where this presents Africa huge political opportunity and advantage of forming genuine alliance over the West in multiple perspectives at the global political-economy (Mathur, 2015), that specifically is instrumental in balancing the Western domination in the global field of the political-economy where Africa had been marginalized for long,

What had been discussed so far described that, these emerging powers (the BRICS) “displayed a remarkable degree of unity and cooperation, working in close concert to successfully challenge the dominance of the US and other established powers,” (Amiel, 2019) which is very essential in boosting the African states political confidence in making substantive political decisions on their own affairs and their effort of achieving Africa’s sustainable development minimizing the imposition of the external forces pressures and demands. The political opportunities of BRICS engagement with Africa with regard to Africa’s development policies, in contrast to the customary (colonial) North-South hierarchical, lord-vassal relation and order, it emphasizes on the idea of South-South-Cooperation (SSC), which is based on solidarity, shared experiences and self-reliance of the South (EU 2012). This contributed to an increase in the flow of trade and investment among Emerging Market and Developing Countries (EMDCs) involving the BRICS with the relative increase in the global flows. As per the survey conducted on recent trends of the political and economic prospects of BRICS’ development policies on the global political-economy structure “the core-periphery conception that has long dominated, or at least influenced, the understanding of the global geopolitical system has lost traction” (BRICS 2017), and this is also considered as a significant achievement and greater opportunity to the continent having visible effects on Africa’s political-economic development. The BRICS-Africa relation is not only created political opportunities for Africa but it might pose challenges on Africa’s economic development when examined from both the intra and inter- BRICS relations with Africa from different perspectives. On the inter-BRICS-Africa relation the political challenges posed on the continent and its people include the following: -

- ❖ The BRICS unconditional political and economic support are the blessing-in-disguise for the dictatorial, despotic and authoritarian African states and their repressive institutions and governments since the BRICS guiding principles are dictated by non-interference policy in the domestic and foreign affairs of independent states and respect for their national

sovereignty. This has set free these authoritarian African states and their repressive governments in their gross abuses of human rights with the continuity of undemocratic practices and experiences in the continent.

- ❖ The BRICS provision of technical assistance and financial aid on the expansion and development of the Information Communication Technology (ICT) with the rapid construction of the digital, virtual and mobile networking infrastructure have adversely used by the West in organizing political oppositions with fake excuse of democratization, observation of the rule of law and human rights where the African youths were instigated to participate in different “Springs” and “Revolutions” in which states such as Libya, Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria and Sudan experienced political turmoil while other African states are following the same political trajectory in the four corners of the continent.
- ❖ The other major political challenges emerged with the BRICS positive political-economy relation with Africa is, unlike the West, they do not attach any strings on the provision of financial and economic assistance to the African states irrespective of their human rights records which tarnished domestic governance and administration by curtailing the importance of accountability, responsibility and transparency making corruption politically, economically and socially acceptable value and norm in the public service provision and administration which negatively affected Africa’s development effort and enterprise.
- ❖ In the global context, more recent developments in terms of the slowdown in BRICS economic growth (Mminele, 2016), will have an adverse effect on the political stability of Africa as a result of the spill over effect of the BRICS economic slowdown on Africa’s fragile economic structure and system that mainly depends on the export of primary products in the global economic and market system.
- ❖ The African states and government loyalty to their ex-colonial masters and their division along the membership of Regional Economic Organizations, plus their global alliance alongside religious, cultural and linguistic patterns are also major political challenges in disharmonizing African political and economic interests on its relation with the BRICS.

The BRICS is the political-economic bloc constituting Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, which are heterogeneous and diverse countries in terms of social, geographical, political and economic structure and organization where this by itself is the political challenge when explored and examined from the existing intra-group political relations of the BRICS that have spill over negative effect on Africa’s politics. Therefore, this study has identified the following challenges posed on Africa-BRICS relation from the existing intra-group political relations of the BRICS: - Heterogeneity of the BRICS group is one part of the political challenge by itself in so many aspects. For example, there is a strategic partnership between China and Russia in shaping and executing the BRICS agenda thereby geo-politically confronting the US and the West, but this “may also be causing repercussions within the group. It has triggered suspicions and distrust from the other three, less powerful, members and is therefore harmful to the group’s original aspirations and visions” (Huang, 2019). Separate competition among member states of the BRICS in strengthening bilateral relation with African states and the intra-African states relation which is always affected by the loyalty of individual African states to their ex-colonial masters and the association established alongside linguistic category, the colonial legacy of border, ethnic and trans-border resource sharing and management will also have negative spill over effect on Africa and other developing regions political and economic strategies. The discussion so far has identified that, Africa-BRICS relation has created very essential political opportunities for the continent both in its domestic and foreign relations, posing critical political challenges on Africa’s economic development when examined from both the intra and inter-BRICS relations with Africa from different perspectives, and the consecutive part of the study attempted to explore, examine and analyze what opportunities and challenges the Africa-BRICS relations contribute on the continent’s economic development.

2.4 Economic Opportunities and Challenges of BRICS-Africa Relation on Africa’s Economic Development

The African economy has been at the mercy of the Western global financial institutions since independence, because the World Bank and other international financial institutions (IFIs) which controlled the financial resources made the implementation of different Western development strategies such as the SAPs a prerequisite for getting loans that complicated and exacerbated Africa’s economic crisis. Major exogenous political and economic factors can be blamed for Africa’s economic crisis and its quagmire which include the following: -“international recession, commodity price collapse, adverse terms of trade, decline in real terms of Official Development Assistance (ODA), increasing protectionism by developed countries, high interest rates, currency fluctuations, high debt and debt-servicing obligations for contributing to the continent’s predicament” (Owusu, 2003). Turning this economic tide, currently African countries are maintaining their economic growth trajectory, a transformational change in which revenue generation, investments and development technologies are critical for creating a resilient and inclusive economy by establishing vital political and economic relation with the striving bloc such as the BRICS whose “economies have grown rapidly with their share of global GDP rising from 11 per cent in 1990 to almost 30 per cent in 2014, [accounting] for over 40 per cent of the world population, hold over US\$4 trillion in reserves and account for over 17 per cent of global trade”(Mminele, 2016).With this huge potential and “the size of the BRICS economies, their economic potential and their demand for stronger political voice on international platforms

make them particularly relevant to Africa's development" (ECA 2014). Therefore, to understand the economic opportunities and challenges of Africa-BRICS relation on Africa's economic development, and its resultant contribution to the world economy and to international development, BRICS economic contribution takes and will take three concrete forms;

As an engine of the world economy, providing a considerable and growing portion of the demand and supply of goods and services, as well as a growing portion of the financial resources and the solutions to problems needed for common progress. To fill gaps, playing a greater role in providing investment and knowledge, and To enable important global goals to be advanced by bringing BRICS common and coordinated actions to bear (BRICS 2017).

According Arkhangelskaya (2015), the Africa-BRICS relation and cooperation has placed special focus on trade and an overall economic development issue that have major significance for Africa, and these issues can be seen as important terrain for the practical implementation, having the following major opportunities on Africa's economic development: - Africa can challenge, counterbalance and reject series of unacceptable Western practices for subordinating the Third World through imposition. Resource efficiency can be adopted for the management of wealth and resources for the greater benefit of people, ecosystems and services. Building strong institutional frameworks — Establishing functional institutions and enabling policies that spur economic growth and lead Africa to sustainable economic development. BRICS in many countries across Africa and in various sectors in the coming years, with investment and trade activities will present significant opportunities for the large and untapped agricultural sector of Africa, as well for investments and transfer of technology and knowledge that target the growing middle class, which is expected to reach one billion by 2060 (ECA 2014), and According to the 2013 Human Development Report, which was published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP 2013), "The rise of the South is radically reshaping the world of the 21st century, with developing nations driving economic growth, lifting hundreds of millions of people from poverty, and propelling billions more into a new global middle class" (ECA 2014). The BRICS countries were driven into a common objective of reforming the international financial and monetary system, with a strong desire to build a more just, and balanced international order that reflects the dynamics of today's global economy and serves the interests of all in a fair manner. To this end, the five countries in the BRICS community play an important role in the G20, in shaping global economic policy and promoting financial stability (Mminele, 2016), contributing huge economic opportunities for Africa's prospective economic development. The BRICS are also becoming significant investors in Africa, especially in the manufacturing and service sectors. With respect to foreign direct investment (FDI), the BRICS have strengthened their presence on the continent compared with traditional partners, such as the United States and Europe. In 2010, for example, the BRICS' share in FDI inward stock and FDI inflows to Africa reached 14 percent and 25 percent, respectively. The share of BRICS countries in the total value of African Greenfield projects reached 25 percent in 2012 compared with 19 percent in 2003 (Arkhangelskaya, 2015).

The BRICS-Africa relation and cooperation created huge opportunities for making it more positive, bright and hopeful than that of the Western global political economy leadership under the US hegemony that has for long imposed its will by sheer size of its economic and military power seen and witnessed from the Middle East and other places which exemplify. But this does not mean that the BRICS-Africa relation and cooperation is perfect and without challenges on Africa's overall economic development, and the study has found out that Africa-BRICS relation posed the following economic challenges Africa's overall economic development: - Africa is primary goods producer where its foreign currency generation is depending on exporting raw materials and run the risk of increasing its dependency on raw material exports compromising the formation of significant manufacturing industries. The BRICS unconditional provision of loans and credits have to be considered seriously in such global political and economic turmoil where African states could be collaterals making them easy prey for the new form of colonialism through the dumping of the BRICS products undermining the developmental needs of their people. Africa's underdevelopment that manifested itself in extreme poverty, conflict, instability, corruption, nepotism, and narrow tribal and ethnic or identity politics deeply exacerbates if the continent is relying on primary goods production and exporting raw materials without any strategic plan of creating sectoral links based on rapid political and economic integration among the economies of the member states and laying the ground for manufacturing and industry that hugely focuses on strengthening intra-Africa trade and business (Mminele, 2016). The overall sluggish growth in advanced economies have directly affected the Africa-BRICS relation and economic cooperation negatively resulting on the maturation of global value chains which has further reduced the elasticity of trade flows to economic activity and exchange rate changes. This contributed for higher capital requirements and tightened financial regulations globally diminishing banks' willingness to extend trade and finance businesses, with the declining commodity prices many commodity-exporting emerging economies came under severe stress leading to the very large currency depreciations where the incongruous monetary policies adopted by individual states in the global economy substantially appreciated the U.S. dollar, putting extensive economic and political challenges not only on the emerging market economies but also on African states too. Finally, BRICS-Africa relation has created not only very profound economic opportunities for the continent but also posed critical economic challenges on Africa's economic development when

examined from the perspectives of what is taking place in the global economic slump and slowdown that adversely affected the advanced and emerging economies including the BRICS.

3.0 Methodology of the Study

Methodologically, this study employed and applied qualitative research approach having the major task of “exploring a problem and developing a detailed understanding of a central Phenomenon” Creswell (2012). Using this approach, the study had generated “results either in non-quantitative form or in the form which are not subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis” Kothari (2004), and they are purely exploratory, explanatory and analytical. In conducting this study, the following methods of collecting both qualitative and quantitative data were used: - primary data and secondary data were gathered from respective data sources, and the secondary data were gathered from desk-based review by examining important and key documents including: research reports, various strategic documents, national and international journals, plus public and private publications, newspapers, audio-visual and electronic sources were also reviewed where text analysis was adopted in the data analyzing process. This paper has six major parts, and part one dealt with the introduction, part two dealt with the objectives of the study, part three mainly focused on methodology, part four discussed findings, part five wrapped up with the conclusion and recommendation, and dedicating the last part for the references.

4.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The political and economic prominence of new emerging powers has created political-economic opportunities and challenges in Africa’s overall political development, and this is coincided with major political and economic gains through much of sub-Saharan Africa, as markets continue to open up to foreign competition, and private capital flows pour into the continent. Spurred largely by China’s unprecedented foray into the continent, the BRICS have turned their gaze toward Africa as a significant component of future growth, due primarily to the continent’s largely untapped markets and huge natural resource wealth. The emergence of these new ‘Southern powers’ to the world stage and their increasing engagement with the African continent is a clear indication that North-South relations are being superseded by South-East and even Africa-South East relations, with profound implications for Africa’s sustainable development. For Africa, the increasing attention from the BRICS has generated a renewed interest from the continent’s traditional western trading partners out of fear of losing their long-held strategic and economic interests in Africa to the new rising Southern powers. However, there exists a great deal of apprehension on the part of many African states when it comes to the possible long-term implications of BRICS-Africa engagement and relation for African development, and whether these new partnerships will result in the same unequal relationship that characterizes the relationship between Africa and the West. Thus, for Africa to achieve both political and economic long-term development in a balanced, mutually independent and respected global political-economic relation, this study has made the following recommendations: -

The African states have to put their houses in order by formulating and adopting vital political and economic policies and strategies by enacting mutually applicable laws that never harm, negatively affect and marginalize investors and development partners like that of the BRICS and others. The African states have to strive to achieve “economic growth and technological change [which] are accompanied by what the great economist Joseph Schumpeter called creative destruction. The African governments must avoid making the same mistakes of political-economy dependency of the past both separately and continentally in the international political-economy with the developed countries or others. Continentally, this can be achieved by The African states, governments, ruling elites, academicians and professionals must vigorously work on adopting, developing and implementing the best experiences, practices, policies and strategies of political, economic and social development of the BRICS by harmonizing it through indigenous African educational system, and The African states have to strengthen their unity (Kwame Nkrumah’s dream of Politically and economically united Africa) in the fight to have permanent representation in the critical and dominant organs of the United Nations such as the Security Council and other international financial and economic organizations where Africans can stand independently without looking for political nannies and caretakers in the global politics. Africa to achieve political, economic and social long-term sustainable development in a balanced, mutually independent and respected global political-economic relation and order not only with the BRICS but also with the West and the rest of the world, its states and governments have to adhere and comply with the recommendations forwarded by this study.

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